



Karen Reine Cornelius

July 13, 1938 - June 1, 2026

Karen Reine Cornelius, a devoted educator, avid traveler, and beloved mother, passed away on Monday June 1st, 2026, leaving behind a legacy of love, learning, and adventure.

Born on July 13, 1938, in Koosharem, Utah, to Lecoy and Vaunda Anderson, Karen grew up in the nearby town of Richfield, Utah. Her childhood was spent in a bustling but loving home alongside her four siblings: Aleith, Shirl, Joyce, and Yvonne.

While studying at Brigham Young University, Karen met Don E. Cornelius at a school dance. Karen loved to joke that she took interest in Don because she could hear the jingle of coins in his pocket. They were married in the Logan LDS Temple on July 31, 1958. They shared a decades long, globe-trotting and loving life together until Don passed away in the early summer of 2022.

After they wed, Don and Karen moved to the Washington DC area. Karen then earned her Bachelor of Education from the University of Maryland. She channeled her passion for helping others into a meaningful career, serving her community first as a substitute teacher, and later as a dedicated ESOL teacher and supervisor for Adult Education in Fairfax County.

Along with her husband Don, Karen possessed an adventurous spirit. The two

traveled the world for work and for pleasure throughout their long marriage. While living in Asia for several years, the two learned to speak Indonesian and in later years used it as a code language, much to the chagrin of their children. They spent many years abroad living in such diverse places as the Philippines, Malaysia, Vietnam and Indonesia just to name a few.

Karen cherished her family and cared deeply for them. She is survived by her devoted children Sean and Anne Cornelius. Over the years she was also a caring grandma to four grandpups, Tashi, Kora, Luna and Olive.

A Celebration of Life will be held in Karen's honor on June 7, 2026 at the Jo Ann Rose Gallery in Reston from 4-6pm (1609-A Washington Plaza, Reston, VA, 20190). A burial service will follow on June 20, 2026, in her hometown of Richfield at 1pm (780 N Main St, Richfield, UT 84701). For those who wish to send floral tributes, flowers may be sent to Magelby Mortuary in Richfield (50 South 100 West, Richfield, UT 84701).

Upcoming Events

Celebration of Life

JUN 7. 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

Jo Ann Rose Gallery @ Reston Community Center
1609-A Washington Plaza N
Reston, VA 20190